



STATE SENATOR **BEV HAMMERSTROM**

Serving the 17th District

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Dear Friends:

This year has been a busy one for the Michigan Legislature. This newsletter discusses just a small portion of the legislation that we have worked on in an effort to make our state a better place to work, live, and raise a family.

The budget remains one of the challenges we have faced this year. My colleagues and I are committed to finding long-term solutions and not just quick fixes. Improving Michigan's economy is a priority for us. Maintaining and creating jobs is the key to improvement. The JOBS package is a series of bills that promotes job growth and encourages job creation. You will find this and other legislative initiatives outlined for you in more detail throughout this newsletter.

As your voice in Lansing, I am always interested in hearing your thoughts and concerns on issues that are important to you. Please do not hesitate to contact me, either by phone, mail, or e-mail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beverly S. Hammerstrom".

Beverly S. Hammerstrom
State Senator



Punching the Clock on JOBS

The proposal, “Fighting for Every Michigan Job,” was introduced to help create manufacturing jobs, spur new small-business investment and provide incentives to expand the state’s economy by getting Michigan residents back to work. Keeping jobs in Michigan is one of the most important efforts we’re concentrating on. This is especially important in those communities where competitive jobs exist just across the state border. This proposal attempts to improve the sluggish job market and, in turn, generate spending. Visit my website for more information in regard to the JOBS Action Plan.

Elections Process Improved; Voters and Taxpayers Benefit

As a township clerk, I often heard from residents who were unhappy with the elections process in Michigan. They were often confused as to when, where, and how to vote. When I was first elected to serve in the Legislature 13 years ago, one of my goals was to simplify this process and I was pleased to see that goal achieved this year. The legislation, designed to boost awareness of elections, improve voter turnout, and save taxpayer dollars, consolidates all elections, and limits them to four a year. Beginning in 2005, Michigan’s elections can only be held on the fourth Tuesday in February and the first Tuesday following the first Monday in May, August, and November. A fifth “floater” date was included to allow school districts to run a millage or bond issue if enough petition signatures are obtained. However, the election must still be held on a Tuesday and may not be held 30 days before or 35 days after one of the four dates above. The legislation also requires elections in the state to be conducted by county, township, or municipal clerks, minimizing any confusion in regard to registering to vote.

2005 Potential Election Dates:

- Tuesday, February 22
- Tuesday, May 3
- Tuesday, August 2
- Tuesday, November 8



Healthy Michigan Caucus

It is apparent that the physical health of our residents contributes to our state’s fiscal health. A major cause of many chronic diseases is poor eating habits and high levels of inactivity. In Michigan, treatment of these diseases accounts for an astonishing 65-70% of health care costs. My colleagues and I formed the Healthy Michigan Caucus in an effort to help increase awareness of chronic diseases. The caucus aims to promote physical and fiscal health and to call attention to the debilitating effects of chronic diseases on our state’s residents and economy. For more information about risk factors for chronic diseases or how to begin your journey to better health, click on the Healthy Michigan Caucus icon featured on my website.

Senator Bev Hammerstrom recently accepted a challenge to get fit on behalf of the Michigan State Senate from state Surgeon General Dr. Kimberlydawn Wisdom. Hammerstrom (at the podium) is surrounded by fellow members of the newly formed Healthy Michigan Caucus.

Cervical Cancer Task Force

January has been designated as Cervical Cancer Screening Month. However, according to recent studies, approximately half of all women diagnosed with cervical cancer have never been screened, and 10 percent of those diagnosed have not been screened in the last five years.

Studies have shown that the number of women diagnosed with cervical cancer has decreased significantly in the last 60 years, due largely to the increase in cancer screenings. Today, advanced screening methods are available, making it a strong possibility to eliminate this disease altogether.

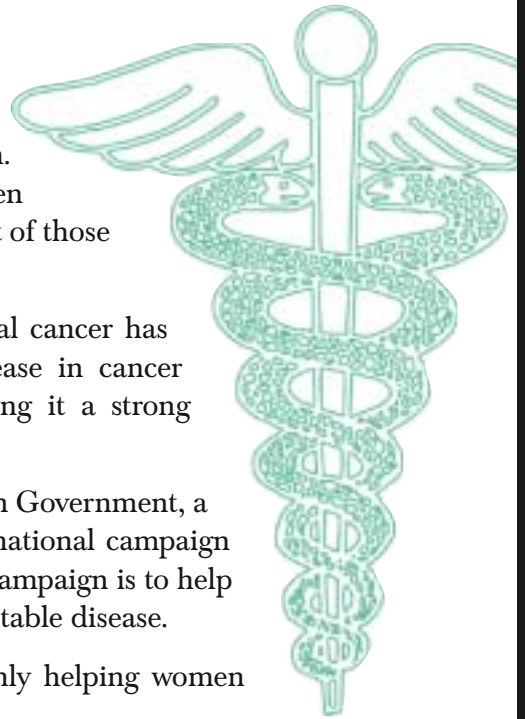
As a member of a Task Force on Cervical Cancer launched by Women in Government, a professional association of women legislators, I have participated in a national campaign known as the Challenge to Eliminate Cervical Cancer. The goal of this campaign is to help reduce the number of women who die each year from this highly preventable disease.

By seizing the opportunity to eliminate cervical cancer, we are not only helping women and families, but we are also establishing a road map for implementing new technologies to fight other cancers. I recently introduced legislation to establish a task force in Michigan to raise public awareness of the disease. The main goal of the task force will be to identify ways state officials can facilitate better education about cervical cancer and screening programs for Michigan women, particularly for underserved women. For more information about cervical cancer, including current statistics and links to organizations such as the American Cancer Society, visit my website.

For the People By the People

Over the years, I have introduced bills in response to conversations with constituents. One such bill involves the state's current jury selection system. After hearing from a constituent who had repeatedly been selected for jury duty, I introduced Senate Bill 1295. SB 1295 helps to alleviate the burden some face when called to serve on a jury by allowing one automatic postponement of jury service. The legislation also aims to reduce the length of jury service, eliminate occupational exemptions that benefit certain professions and provide further protection of employment rights.

I am also looking into the issue of landlocked cemeteries throughout the state. I was contacted by a group of residents who are not able to maintain the gravesites or pay respect to ancestors buried in a particular cemetery because of disputes between the group and owners of the adjacent properties. I am currently reviewing how other states have resolved this unfortunate situation.



Website Updates

A new and more informative website offers the residents of the 17th District the opportunity to read about current news and events involving the Michigan Senate. Features such as a press release archive, my biweekly publication, "Hammerstrom's Hotline," and other news articles I have written are only a click away. Other helpful links include the Michigan Legislature's website, which allows you to follow the status of a bill, as well as federal and local government sites. This information is available at www.senate.michigan.gov/hammerstrom. Bookmark this site for future reference to up-to-date information involving state government.





State Senator

Bev Hammerstrom

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Capitol Celebrates 125th Anniversary

125 years ago, on January 1, 1879, the current State Capitol building was dedicated to the people of Michigan. Organizers for the 125th anniversary celebration have planned many special events for the entire year, including the release of a limited-edition commemorative coin which will be handed out to Capitol visitors throughout the year, and the creation of a permanent artifacts room featuring Capitol-related pictures and memorabilia. The Capitol building was designed by Elijah Myers, who also designed state capitols for Colorado and Texas. From 1989 to 1992, the building was renovated due to years of deterioration and restored to include characteristics of the original 1870's architecture.

For more information about the anniversary celebration, or to learn more about Capitol tours, visit **www.michigan.gov** and click on the "Michigan Government" link.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can get up-to-date information on bills or resolutions introduced by the Michigan Legislature by visiting **www.michiganlegislature.org**.

Kids can learn more about our great state of Michigan with **www.michigan.gov/mikids**. The website includes links where they can play the State Symbols Multiple Choice game, see pictures of the Mackinac Bridge, and find their favorite destination in Michigan on a map.

For the latest updates concerning the Emerald Ash Borer and Michigan's quarantine areas, visit the state Department of Agriculture's website at **www.michigan.gov/mda** or call, toll-free, 1-866-325-0023.

The Michigan Organ and Tissue Donor Registry is a confidential, computerized database that documents your wishes regarding organ donation. For more information, visit the Secretary of State's website at **www.michigan.gov/sos**.

